

Domestic Abuse Policy

VERSION: JULY 2020

1. THE POLICY

1.1 To clarify the Diocese's policy regarding the Domestic Abuse Policy

We want to have a working environment that promotes the view that violence against people is unacceptable and everyone has the right to a life free from abuse in any form. Domestic violence is wholly unacceptable and inexcusable behaviour, and responsibility for domestic violence lies with the perpetrator.

2. DEFINITION

2.1 Domestic abuse is often seen as just physical abuse however for the purposes of this policy, domestic abuse is defined as "any incident of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional) between individuals over 16 who are, or have been, partners or family members including children, regardless of gender or sexuality."

2.2 For example;

- Physical abuse would include punching, slapping, hitting, biting, pinching, kicking, pulling hair out, pushing, shoving, burning or strangling.
- Emotional abuse is any use of words, voice, action or lack of action meant to control, hurt or demean another person. Emotional abuse typically includes ridicule, intimidation or coercion. Verbal abuse is included within this and covers name-calling and use of abusive language, constant criticism or humiliation, disproportionate anger and irrational blaming of the other person. It can include making excessive calls to work or ignoring someone. The perpetrator may then deny the abuse is happening and/or blame the recipient.
- Financial abuse is the use or misuse of the financial or other monetary resources of the other person. Common examples of financial abuse include controlling shared resources such as bank accounts, withholding money, hiding assets or forging someone's signature on financial documents.

3. PRINCIPLES - WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT FROM THE DIOCESE IF YOU ARE SUFFERING FROM DOMESTIC ABUSE

3.1 We will be supportive of anyone who has been subjected to domestic abuse, in terms of his or her existing employment or career development and we aim to enable employees experiencing domestic abuse to remain productive and at work.

- 3.2 We will make every effort to assist an employee experiencing domestic abuse. If an employee needs to be absent from work due to domestic abuse, the length of the absence will be determined by the individual's situation through collaboration with the employee and their line manager and will be in line with other current policies such as flexible working, unpaid leave, parental leave or compassionate leave.
- 3.3 We will actively provide support to employees to try and minimise the risk to their safety while at work, if they make it known to us that they are experiencing domestic abuse.
- 3.4 Confidentiality will be maintained, and information restricted only to those who have a need to know. However, there are some circumstances in which confidentiality cannot be assured. These occur when there are concerns about children or vulnerable adults or where an employer needs to act to protect the safety of employees.
- 3.5 We will provide a level of awareness and information for Managers to help raise awareness of domestic abuse, signs of what to look for and understanding of this policy.

4. SUPPORT AVAILABLE

- 4.1 The Care First Employee Assistance Programme is available for use by all Diocesan staff and can provide information and support on 0800 174319.
- 4.2 The Diocesan Safeguarding Co-ordinator can advise: angela.mcgrory@abdiocese.org.uk

5. INTERNAL SUPPORT

- 5.1 Your manager can support you by listening and talking through options available to help you remain productive at work.
- 5.2 You can speak with the HR team at Bishop's House, Hove, confidentially about any additional support you may require.

6. WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT FROM THE DIOCESE IF YOU ARE A PERPETRATOR

- 6.1 Employees who perpetrate domestic abuse should be aware that such behaviour goes against this policy. Some forms of domestic abuse are a crime.
- 6.2 If we are made aware with evidence that you have committed domestic abuse to someone within the Diocese then appropriate action will be taken and you may be subject to disciplinary action.
- 6.3 Employees charged or convicted in court because of domestic violence and abuse should declare this formally.
- 6.4 Employees who ask for help will be provided with support
- 6.5 It is recognised that perpetrators of domestic violence may wish to seek help voluntarily. For more information on what help is available for perpetrators contact Respect on 0846 122 8609 or www.respectphoneline.org.uk.

The Respect phone line provides information and advice to perpetrators of domestic violence, to professionals wanting information and to the friends and family (including partners) of perpetrators who want more information on what help is available for perpetrators.

7. IF BOTH THE VICTIM AND PERPETRATOR WORK FOR THE DIOCESE

7.1 In cases where both the victim and perpetrator of domestic abuse work for the Diocese we will take appropriate action including:

- considering utilising different locations and working hours;
- minimising the potential for the perpetrator to use their position or work resources to find out details about the whereabouts of the victim;
- offering impartial support and where possible ensuring the victim and perpetrator have different line managers, who are both able to provide appropriate information to each party.
- In some circumstances we may need to consider options around the suspension of one or both parties, so we could conduct an investigation. Where there is clear evidence of domestic abuse, we may take disciplinary action.

8. INFORMATION FOR MANAGERS

8.1 You should create a supportive environment in which employees are able to disclose abuse if they wish to do so, though you should not pressure anyone for information in this respect.

8.2 Signs to look for regarding domestic abuse include unexplained bruising or injury, sudden changes in behaviour or unexplained drops in an individual's level of performance. It may also include periods of short term absence or lateness or a change to the way an employee dresses; for example, wearing excessive clothing on hot days.

8.3 If someone confides in you – reassure them that the Diocese takes domestic abuse seriously and explain the support that is on offer. Make sure they are aware of the other policies in place such as flexible working and the availability of compassionate leave (contact COO to discuss).

8.4 Contact the Diocesan Safeguarding Co-ordinator: angela.mcgrory@abdiocese.org.uk

9. WHO IS COVERED BY THIS POLICY?

9.1 All individuals working for the Diocese at any of its premises, irrespective of their employment or contractual status or level - it therefore includes all people managers, employees, contractors, agency staff and anyone else engaged to work on behalf of the Diocese.

10. CONTACTING THE HR DEPARTMENT

10.1 The Diocese works with an external HR adviser for support on employment issues. HR support is provided through the Chief Operating Officer via coo@abdiocese.org.uk

Approval

This policy was approved by the Diocesan Board of Trustees on:
The next review is due by:

8 July 2020
31 July 2022