

	DOMESTIC ABUSE POLICY	Ref:	011
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DOMESTIC ABUSE POLICY

Introduction

The Company is committed to providing the support and assistance necessary to ensure, so far as possible, the health, safety and well-being of their employees at work. This policy covers the internal and external support available to employees experiencing, or involved in, domestic abuse, which includes domestic violence. Everyone has the right to live free from domestic abuse in any form and the responsibility for abuse lies with the perpetrator.

Employees who are suffering from domestic abuse are more likely to be absent from work, work inefficiently and have poor productivity levels. In addition, there is a risk both to the employee, other employees, and the business, if an abusive partner or ex-partner attends the workplace.

For the purposes of this policy, domestic abuse is abusive behaviour by one person towards another, where both the individuals are aged 16 or over and they are personally connected. The abusive behaviour can be a single incident or a course of conduct.

Behaviour is abusive if it consists of any of the following:

- physical or sexual abuse;
- violent or threatening behaviour;
- controlling or coercive behaviour;
- economic abuse; or
- psychological, emotional or other abuse.

This policy applies equally to men and women.

Aims of the policy

The aims of this policy are to:

- Support employees experiencing domestic abuse and promote their health, safety and well-being at work;
- Offer support to employees who recognise that they are the perpetrators of domestic abuse and want to seek help to address their behaviour;
- Enable employees experiencing domestic abuse to remain productive, efficient and at work;
- Aid line managers seeking to help staff who are experiencing domestic abuse; and
- Assist colleagues of staff who are experiencing domestic abuse.

Advice and counselling

It is the Company's intention to deal constructively with cases of domestic abuse and abuse. In order to support employees, the Company will:

- Nominate a staff member as a first point of contact for those experiencing, or perpetrating, domestic abuse. Any discussions will be strictly confidential as far as possible, unless the employee agrees otherwise.
- Provide professional counselling with independent, trained counsellors through an external advice help line. This is an entirely confidential service and any discussions an employee has with an external counsellor will be strictly confidential unless the employee agrees otherwise. All employees

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are encouraged to make use of this service if they are the victims, or the perpetrators, of domestic abuse.

- Endeavour to identify employees with possible domestic abuse issues at an early stage.
- Undertake to raise workplace awareness of domestic abuse issues.
- Offer information and guidance and actively encourage employees to seek appropriate external help and support, including assisting with referrals to appropriate authorities and agencies, such as the police, Refuge, Women’s Aid and the National Domestic abuse Helpline (see below section on ‘External support’).

Line manager’s role

Line managers have an important role to play in enabling employees experiencing domestic abuse to seek help and support. The Company provides training for managers in handling sensitive issues, including domestic abuse. The role of the line manager is to:

- Identify employees experiencing difficulties as a result of domestic abuse, for example, employees coming to work with unexplained injuries or who appear distressed or have unexplained periods of time off work or show an uncharacteristic deterioration in work performance.
- Provide initial help and support, including advice on the options available for the employee, but also recognising the limitations of their role in that they are not professional counsellors.
- Protect confidentiality as far as possible, unless the employee agrees otherwise.
- Refer the employee to appropriate internal and external sources of further help and support, for example, the Company’s first point of contact, the Company’s external advice help line and external agencies; which may include the source of external support set out below.
- Discuss measures to prioritise safety at work and ensure that the health and safety of all employees is protected.
- Enable the employee to remain productive, efficient and at work.
- Recognise that the employee may need some time to decide what to do and may try many different options during the process.

External support

The Company will signpost external sources of help and support where appropriate, including:

[Respect](#), which provides practical information and advice on domestic abuse for perpetrators, the abused, health and social care professionals, and family and friends;

[the National Domestic Abuse Helpline](#), which provides advice for those experiencing domestic abuse;

[Women’s aid](#), which provides women experiencing domestic abuse with advice and support;

Business in the Community's [domestic abuse toolkit](#) which contains resources for employers to help employees feel supported and empowered by their workplace to deal with domestic abuse; and

[Government advice and guidance](#) for those who are experiencing, or feel at risk of, domestic abuse.]

Confidentiality and data protection

Where an employee has discussions with their line manager, an alternative line manager or the Company’s first point of contact about domestic abuse issues that they are experiencing or are involved in, confidentiality will be maintained as far as possible. However, in some instances, disclosure may need to be made to other members of the management team and/or external authorities or agencies

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in order that appropriate further help and support can be provided to the employee, but this will always be subject to prior discussion with the employee and only with their express agreement. The Company will ensure that personal data collected in connection with any complaint or incident of domestic abuse is processed in accordance with its data protection policy and any internal privacy notices in force at the relevant time.

Inappropriate access or disclosure of personal data will constitute a data breach and should be reported immediately to the Company's Data Protection Officer in accordance with the Company's data protection policy. Reported data breaches will be investigated and may lead to sanctions under the Company's disciplinary procedure.

Performance and attendance

The Company recognises that those experiencing domestic abuse may have difficulties with their performance because of the domestic abuse and/or may need to be absent from work from time to time. It will assist them in this regard by being sensitive in its approach and/or using its special leave policies and procedures.

Safety at work

The Company will protect the health, safety and well-being of all employees at work, including those employees affected by domestic abuse and all other employees. This includes situations where the perpetrator of the violence is harassing the employee at work, for example, turning up at the workplace unannounced, constantly telephoning/e-mailing/texting the employee during the working day or harassing the employee's work colleagues.

Employees need to disclose to the Company that they are at risk from domestic abuse in order to receive this protection and the Company therefore actively encourages employees to disclose such facts. Other employees should also disclose to the Company if they are being harassed by a work colleague's current or former partner or family member.

Reviewed:- 14th October 2025

S L Pickles
 Director
 Serendipity Healthcare Ltd.