



# BEYOND LIMITS

Beyond the limits of conventional support

## Domestic Abuse Policy

March 2025

Review: March 2026

This policy covers the internal and external support available to employees experiencing, or involved in, domestic abuse.

## INTRODUCTION

Everyone has the right to live free from abuse in any form and Beyond Limits are clear that the responsibility for abuse lies with the perpetrator.

It is recognised there is an increased awareness of the prevalence of domestic abuse in society and the organisation understands that there may be:

- Colleagues who are directly experiencing domestic abuse
- Colleagues who want to support friends and/or their co-workers
- Colleagues who have family members who are experiencing domestic abuse

This policy is for all staff to ensure that all employees, not just those who are experiencing domestic abuse are aware of the organisations position and its implications, including its implications for employees who are perpetrating domestic abuse.

## POLICY AIMS

### THE AIMS OF THIS POLICY ARE:

- To ensure that all employees are aware of this policy and the organisations approach to supporting those that are affected by domestic abuse, whether directly or indirectly
- To ensure that all employees who ask for help in addressing domestic abuse issues can access appropriate advice and support, including from appropriate national agencies and public bodies
- To support all employees experiencing domestic abuse and promote their health, safety and wellbeing at work
- To recognise that an employee's ability to work may be impacted both directly by the perpetrator of domestic abuse, but also indirectly due to the physical and mental impacts of domestic abuse
- Enable employees (including those who are supporting family members experiencing domestic abuse) experiencing domestic abuse to remain productive, efficient and at work

- To provide guidance to line managers on how to recognise possible victims of domestic abuse
- To provide guidance to line managers on how to support and assist employees asking for help in addressing domestic abuse
- Support perpetrators who voluntarily wish to seek advice and support to address their behaviour

Beyond Limits is committed to promoting zero tolerance of domestic in line with our role in promoting community safety. Any colleague who is a perpetrator of domestic abuse is strongly encouraged to seek support from the organisation in order that they can be signposted to appropriate external services.

It is the organisation's intention to deal constructively, compassionately and sympathetically with cases of domestic abuse. The organisation will support all those who endure and/or witness domestic abuse. If you are concerned about your own personal situation or that of a colleague, you are encouraged to seek immediate support.

You can speak in confidence to your Line Manager, HR Manager ([edyta.piekarska@beyondlimits-uk.org](mailto:edyta.piekarska@beyondlimits-uk.org)) or a Mental Health First Aider ([esther.coules@beyondlimits-uk.org](mailto:esther.coules@beyondlimits-uk.org)) who can signpost you to resources and help you with any disclosure conversations you would like to have with colleagues and, if you have not done so already, with our HR Manager who will work with you to formulate a response including:

- Discussing and agreeing ways to help you stay safe in the workplace
- Directing you to the appropriate domestic abuse resources; and
- Facilitating referrals.

## ROLE OF THE LINE MANAGER

Line Managers have a role to play in enabling employees experiencing domestic abuse to seek help and support. The role of the line manager is to:

- Identify employees who may be experiencing difficulties as a result of domestic abuse (see paragraph on identification below)
- Provide initial help and support

- **Protect confidentiality as far as possible (see paragraph on confidentiality 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**

## **IDENTIFICATION**

People experiencing domestic abuse may feel stigmatised and disempowered. They may not want to admit or share their experience because they may feel some responsibility for the situation, or they may feel shame, or that they should be able to deal with the situation on their own. There can also be fears that they will not be believed, their experiences will be trivialised, that it will cause trouble for the perpetrator, or that there might be a negative outcome for their children.

Identifying that an employee is experiencing difficulties at an early stage can help ensure that appropriate support is provided and help the employee to deal with their situation more effectively. This can reduce repeated work absences and can ultimately reduce the extent of the domestic abuse experienced.

Domestic abuse may be identified through monitoring absence and putting together other potential indicators. Some of the indicators could be:

- **Uncharacteristically depressed, anxious, distracted, lacking in concentration, self-confidence or self-esteem**
- **Changes in the quality of work for no apparent reason**
- **Receiving repeated upsetting telephone calls/messages/emails etc.**
- **Increased absenteeism or lateness and/or with unusual explanations**
- **Repeatedly requiring time off for appointments**
- **Wearing excessive clothing**
- **Repeated injuries or unexplained bruising**
- **Unusual use of alcohol or other substances**
- **Obsession with time**
- **Avoiding lunch breaks or socialising outside of work**
- **Nervous on arrival and when leaving work**
- **Reluctant to leave work at the end of the working day**
- **Isolating themselves at work**

## CONFIDENTIALITY

Talking about domestic abuse can be very difficult.

If an employee raises an issue about domestic abuse with a manager or colleague, then this discussion and any subsequent discussions must be treated with confidentiality and respect. Confidentiality should only be broken in order to protect the safety of an individual, particularly in the case of children or vulnerable adults. Manager and colleagues must make this clear to the employee at an appropriate point in the conversation about domestic abuse.

All meetings with employees should take place in private and any information recorded should be kept securely in accordance with the organisations Data Protection policy.

## RESPONDING SENSITIVELY

Managers need to be approachable and available if an employee raises the matter with them. However, if a manager suspects that an employee is affected by domestic abuse, they can and should encourage them to discuss their concerns.

It is important that managers respond sensitively when they are aware that a member of staff is experiencing domestic abuse. Managers can do this by:

- Ensuring privacy for any conversations about the issues – using an office or room where interruptions can be avoided
- Respecting confidentiality
- Being non-judgmental and patient – a member of staff experiencing domestic abuse may need time to decide what to do and may try different short-term and long-term options during the process. They have the right to make informed decisions about their own future and circumstances
- Offering the option of speaking to another manager who may be more appropriate, such as a manager of the same sex or ethnicity as the employee experiencing domestic abuse.
- Discussing the different ways that the organisation's policies or benefits may support the employee or providing a list of external agencies who may be able to provide additional or different support

- When an employee has discussions with their line manager, an alternative line manager, HR contact or a Mental Health First Aider that they are experiencing domestic abuse, confidentiality will usually be maintained as far as possible

## PRACTICAL SUPPORT

If an employee discloses that they are experiencing domestic abuse, their line manager should advise them of sources of support, including access to counselling, referral to appropriate agencies and involvement of the police. However, no referrals should be made on behalf of the employee without their consent. It should also be noted that Managers are not expected to act as counsellors or advisors.

Employees experiencing domestic abuse may be more vulnerable to stress at work and may have attendance and/or performance issues as a result. Therefore, in addition to the immediate assistance and counselling referred to above, managers are encouraged to consider ways in which the sympathetic use of our employment policies and procedures can be used to support employees experiencing domestic abuse as detailed below.

The organisation acknowledges that an employer who is a victim of domestic abuse may require additional leave of absence when attempting to seek help or leave an abusive relationship. Leave requests may be made in relation to appointments with support agencies, welfare agencies, legal advisors, housing agencies, to attend relevant court hearings, or perhaps to arrange for suitable childcare.

In such circumstances it may be appropriate to:

- Arrange temporary flexible working hours so the employee can seek protection, go to court, look for new housing, or enter counselling etc.
- Agree to the use of compassionate leave or concessionary time or time off for dependents, particularly if the requests are for relatively short periods. Senior managers have discretion for compassionate leave and time off for dependents to be paid or unpaid. They are encouraged to look sympathetically at paid options where appropriate. Requests should be in writing with clear parameters agreed before any paid time off is taken.

A temporary variation to hours or patterns of work can help to ensure that the employee is less at risk at work and on their journeys to and from work.

It may be appropriate to offer changes in specific duties, such as answering phones or working in the reception area, or in exceptional circumstances, seeking another post, if alternative arrangements cannot be easily found.

Where a victim and a perpetrator of domestic abuse both work for the organisation, it will take steps to stop any abuse relating to issues arising in the workplace using the appropriate policies and procedures.

Line managers should discuss and agree with the employee what to tell colleagues, including how they should respond if the perpetrator telephones or calls at the workplace.

## SAFETY AT WORK

We acknowledge our duty to protect the health, safety and wellbeing of all employees at work, including those employees affected by domestic abuse. This includes situations where the perpetrator of the abuse is harassing the employee at work, for example, turning up at the workplace unannounced, constantly telephoning/messaging/e-mailing the employee during the working day or harassing the employee's work colleagues. Employees need to disclose to the organisation that they are at risk from domestic abuse in order to receive this protection and the organisation therefore actively encourages employees to disclose such facts. Other employees should also disclose to the organisation if they are being harassed by a work colleague, current or former partner or family member.

Beyond Limits are committed to taking all reasonable steps to minimise the risks to safety of its employees while at work, in particular where they are known to have experienced domestic abuse.

When a manager is made aware of domestic abuse, they should discuss with the employee whether there is any risk to the employee or to their colleagues whilst at work. The manager should seek advice in carrying out a risk assessment and take action to minimise the risk in the workplace.

Physical security can be very important in cases of domestic abuse. Care must be taken to ensure that employees' personal information, for example home addresses or telephone numbers are not given out to individuals from outside the workforce, who are not properly authorised to have it.

The Data Protection Act clearly prohibits improper disclosure of such information, and it is particularly important to help ensure that employees and their families are safe at home, travelling to and from work and when carrying out their duties.

If anyone is unsure of whether it is appropriate to give out information about a colleague, or feel in any way intimidated to do so, they must discuss the situation with a line manager before taking any action.



## APPENDIX ONE

[Home - Women's Aid](#)

[Domestic abuse | PLYMOUTH.GOV.UK](#)

[Domestic abuse and sexual violence - help and advice - Cornwall Council](#)

[Somerset Domestic Abuse](#)

[Domestic abuse - Dorset Council](#)

[Trevi House Plymouth 01752 977 614](#)

[Domestic Abuse — The Zone](#)

[LGBT+ Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Support - Intercom Trust](#)

[ManKind Initiative - Supporting Male Victims of Domestic Abuse](#)

