DOMESTIC ABUSE POLICY

THE ARTHUR ELLIS
MENTAL HEALTH FOUNDATION

Introduction

Here at Arthur Ellis we want you to know that we'll do everything we can to support you if you're experiencing or are close to anyone impacted by domestic abuse. 1 in 4 women and 1 in 8 men are likely to experience domestic abuse in their lives. It takes an average of 46 incidents for the survivor to recognise what it is and they will often go back to the relationship again and again as they are convinced that they are causing their partner to act in this way. Children are always impacted by domestic abuse and will usually know what is happening. They may try and protect the survivor , by getting in between the adults or attach the perpetrator at a time they cannot fight back (i.e. when asleep). Alternatively, they may join in with the abuse. If children are impacted and at risk then a MASH referral must be submitted.

We know that we'll have colleagues who are experiencing domestic abuse, or who want to support their friends, colleagues or family members who are going through it. We believe that everyone has a right to live free from abuse in any form.

If you're reading this because you've been affected, we want you to know that we are here to listen and will support you to feel safe at work if you speak out. We're committed to supporting all our colleagues and it is our intention to deal constructively, compassionately, and sympathetically with cases of domestic abuse.

The purpose of this policy is to help you understand what domestic abuse is and give you information about what help is available both inside and outside of Arthur Ellis whether you need it for yourself or to help someone else.

What is Domestic Abuse?

Domestic abuse describes abusive behaviours that take place between two people aged over 16 who are personally connected to each other. This includes people who are, or have previously been married, in civil partnerships or in relationships; or have a child together; or are relatives, including abuse of adult parents or adult children. Domestic abuse is not gender specific and can happen to anyone regardless of gender, race, religions or sexual orientation. It is a criminal offence and can lead to a criminal conviction.

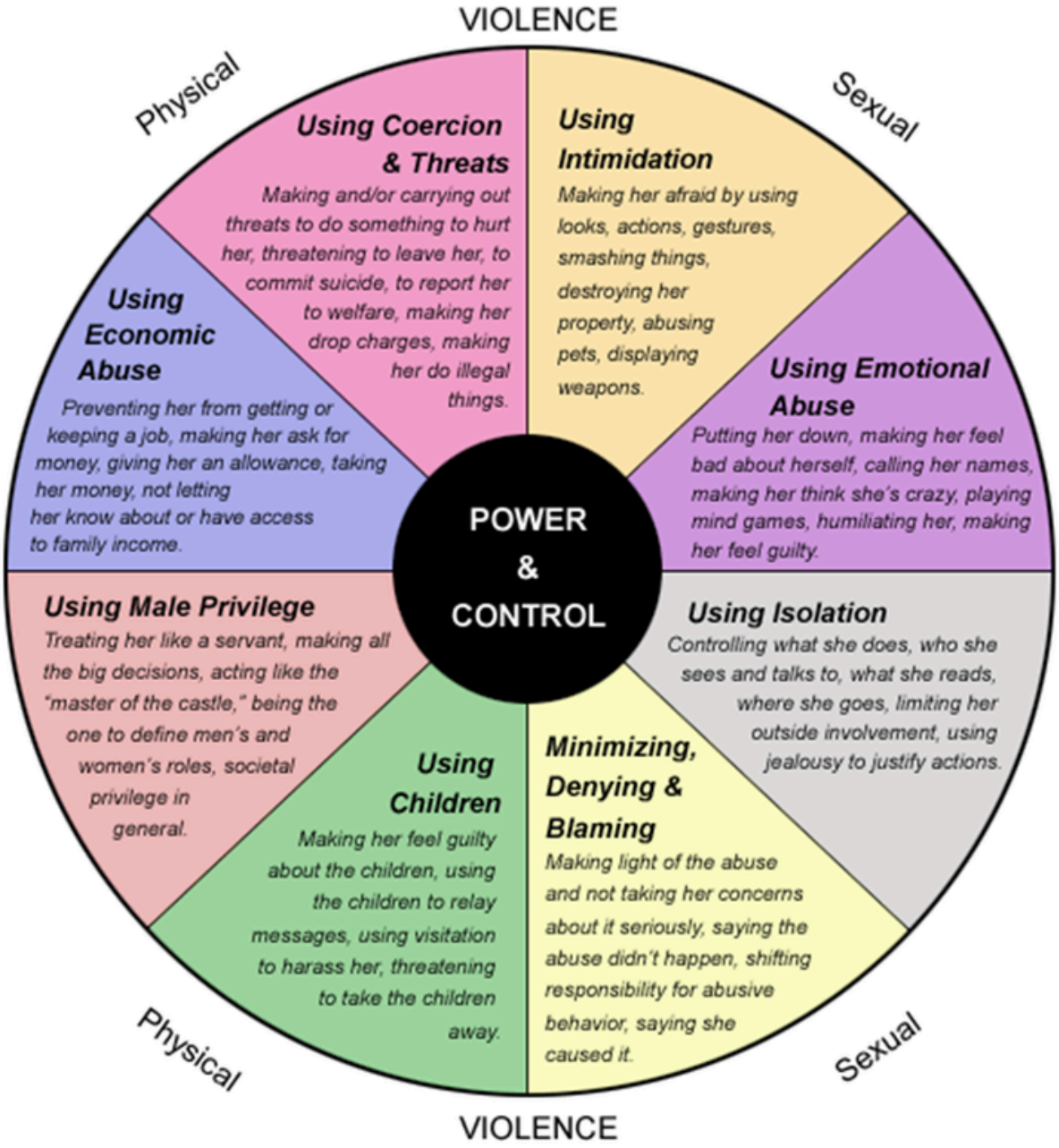
The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 states that abuse can be a single incident, but is often a pattern of behaviours that can take many forms including:

- Physical or Sexual Abuse,
- Violent or threatening behaviour,
- Controlling or coercive behaviour,
- Economic or Financial Abuse,
- Online Abuse, and/or
- Psychological and emotional abuse.

This list is not exhaustive.

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What is Domestic Abuse? cont.

It also includes stalking and so called 'honour' based violence such as female genital mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage. The Law also defines children as being victims of domestic abuse if they see, hear or experience the effects of the abuse.

Men , women and same sex relationships can experience domestic abuse. Men are less likely to tell anyone.

Recognising Domestic Abuse

Does your partner, ex-partner or someone you live with do any of the below? If so, you may be experiencing domestic abuse. Domestic abuse is not always physical violence:

- Cuts you off from family and friends and intentionally isolates you,
- Bullies, threatens, or controls you,
- Takes control of your finances,
- Monitors or limits your use of technology,
- Physically and/or sexually abuses you, and/or
- Controls your medication.

This list is not extensive. Some signs that someone is experiencing domestic abuse may be:

- Frequent absence from work, lateness or needing to leave work early,
- Reduced quality and/or quantity of work or missed deadlines,
- An increase in the number of hours spent at work for no reason,
- Changes in the way a colleague communicates – many personal calls or texts or a strong reaction to personal calls,
- Physical signs and symptoms such as unexplained or frequent bruises or other injuries,
- A change in behaviour – for example becoming more withdrawn than usual,
- Excessive clothing on a hot day,
- Change in the amount of makeup worn,
- Changes in social behaviour – for example not turning up to social activities, and/or
- An obsession with leaving work on time.

This list is not extensive. If you are a concerned Manager or colleague reading this policy, it's important to remember it's not your responsibility to fix the issue, take on the role of counsellor or be an expert on domestic abuse. What you can do is be alert to the signs, provide support by listening and signpost to the appropriate help at the end of this policy.

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Telling Someone

We know that you might not want to talk to anyone about what you are going through. However, it's important to speak to your Manager or someone else you trust as soon as possible if you are, or think you are experiencing domestic abuse, so that we know what's happening and how we can support you. By telling us, we can also do what we can to keep you safe. Your Manager can provide initial support, signpost you to resources and help you with any disclosure conversations you would like to have with your colleagues.

The role of your Manager is to:

- Be alert to spotting the possible signs of domestic abuse and have a supportive conversation with you if they are concerned,
- Provide initial help and support, including signposting to appropriate sources of professional help and support (like those at the end of this policy),
- Protect your confidentiality as far as possible,
- Support you to make any initial calls for help on a work phone if needed,
- Help you get paid differently if your abuse is financial,
- Agree measures to prioritise safety at work and make sure that your health and safety is protected,
- Help you to remain productive and efficient whilst at work, and
- If you don't feel like you can speak to your Manager please read on to find a number of charities and support numbers where you can reach out.

If you're not ready to disclose anything to anyone at work, we would strongly encourage you to contact one of the specialist support agencies at the end of this policy. If it's safe for you to do so we would recommend downloading the Bright Sky App as a first step to access local support if you are unsure where to turn.

If you are unsure about what you are experiencing and whether it is abuse or not, you can learn more about the signs by visiting one of the websites at the end of this policy.
If you need immediate help, you can ask for ANI in a participating pharmacy. 'ANI' stands for Action Needed Immediately but also sounds like the name Annie. If a pharmacy has the 'Ask for ANI' logo display, it means they're ready to help. They will offer you a private space, provide a phone and ask if you need support from the police or other domestic abuse support services.

If you're a Manager and want to know more about how to help a colleague, you can read our guide for Managers (below).

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Confidentiality

If you tell your Manager about your experience, they'll keep this confidential and won't share this information unless you say it's okay – except if we've got serious concerns for your safety or that of others. This includes where there are safeguarding concerns about children or vulnerable adults, where there is a high risk to safety or where we must act to protect the safety of members of the public, including other colleagues or customers. All records about domestic abuse will be kept strictly confidential.

If a perpetrator is placing you or members of your family in genuine or immediate danger, we may need to report this to the police.

Where it's necessary for us to share confidential information, we will always discuss this with you first unless it's unreasonable to do so.

Any breaches of confidentiality by any colleague will be taken seriously and may be subject to disciplinary action.

Time off Work

We know that if you are experiencing domestic abuse you may need time away from work to manage legal or accommodation issues and deal with family demands. We also know everyone situation will be unique. We won't assume to know how much leave you might need as everyone's situation is different. This Policy isn't about creating a one-size fits all approach. It's about highlighting all the different ways that we can support you – so you can decide what works best for you.

Any requests for paid or unpaid time off work or changes to working patterns would need to be agreed in discussion with your Manager. We will always agree a reasonable amount of unpaid time off to support you.

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Your Safety at Work

At Arthur Ellis we have a duty to protect your health, safety, and well-being when you are at work. If you tell us that you are experiencing domestic abuse, we will provide reasonable support to you to try and minimise any risk to your safety while at work. This includes situations where a perpetrator may be harassing you at work, for example, turning up at the workplace unannounced, constantly contacting you during the working day or harassing other colleagues.

We are committed to protecting your safety and making changes where reasonable to minimise any risk. Speak to your Manager if you need any extra support to ensure your safety.

Examples of the kind of practical changes that could help keep you safe include:

- Screening or diverting phone calls and email messages,
- Helping you make alternative arrangements for you to travel safely to and from home or work,
- Providing an alternative phone extension or email address if you are receiving harassing calls and emails,
- Giving you a personal alarm,
- Considering a temporary change to your working patterns so they're not predictable to others,
- Keeping a record of incidents in the workplace (for example harassing calls or visits),
- Agreeing what information to share with colleagues and how they should respond if a perpetrator visits the workplace, with your consent, and
- Providing a safe place to work in an Arthur Ellis location even if most of your role can be carried out at home.

If you're managing someone who has disclosed domestic abuse to you, you should not directly involve yourself in the situation for example by confronting the abuser. This could make things more difficult for them. Your role in this situation is to:

- Provide support for your colleague in the workplace and make any adjustments to support their safety, and
- Help the colleague find the right professional help.

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Emotional Support

You can access free, professional and confidential emotional support in-house using our services, or with one of our Supervising Partners.

If you would prefer to speak to someone who is specially trained in domestic abuse, you can contact one of the specialist organisations listed at the end of this policy. The National Centre for Domestic Violence can also provide more information and links to where counselling can be provided.

Working Adjustments

As well as making small changes to help keep you safe, there may also be adjustments we can make at work to help you cope if you find things difficult or need to make temporary changes to working patterns to manage family demands.

Your Manager may do a risk assessment to understand more about how your experience might affect you at work and discuss any adjustments you might need. You can also use a Safety Plan to identify how your experience has impacted you at work and use this to discuss any changes you might need with your Manager.

The adjustments we can make will depend on your circumstances, but the types of changes that might help could be:

- Providing a safe and confidential space for any meetings with external support agencies (for example solicitors, housing or social services),
- Adjusting start and finish times or a temporary changes of work location or patterns,
- Adopting Hybrid Working (if appropriate),
- Turning your camera off when on video calls,
- Making changes to specific duties to avoid any potential contact with the perpetrator, and
- Adjusting goals and performance targets.

Your Manager might suggest that you go to your GP for support if you haven't already. They might ask to get more information about how your experience is likely to affect you at work, and what adjustments we can make to help.

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Finances & Pay

We want you to be in control of the pay that you receive from Arthur Ellis. If you experience economic or financial abuse, you may not have control or access to the pay we give you. Your Manager may be able to help you change your bank details to a bank account you have control of.

If you need to find new accommodation quickly, please talk to your Manager so that we can support you in this and accommodate your workload accordingly.

Perpetrators

Arthur Ellis does not tolerate or condone domestic abuse in any form. We recognise that the responsibility for domestic abuse lies with the perpetrator. However, if a colleague tells us about their abusive behaviour and genuinely wants to change, we will engage with them to identity the appropriate external support. This could include providing access to specialist support services decided on a case by case basis.

Speak to your Manager if you are looking for help or you can contact The Respect Helpline confidentially on 0808 802 4040.

Just to be clear, any domestic abuse including the use of Arthur Ellis equipment to inflict domestic abuse such as mobile phones, laptops or other mobile devices is seen as gross misconduct. It may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. If offences of a criminal nature are disclosed by a perpetrator to another colleague or Manager, we have a duty to contact the police.

Monitoring and Reviewing

AEMHF will monitor and review this policy to make sure the aims of the policy are being achieved. This will be undertaken annually by the CEO.

Staff are encouraged to feedback any observations and comments.

This Policy will be reviewed every 3 years unless:

- Changes in legislation and guidance on the protection of children or adults at risk.
- Significant changes within AEMHF.
- Following recommendations about an incident or near miss.

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Helping Someone Else

We recognise that often colleagues are the first to spot the signs of domestic abuse in their co-workers. If you are worried about a colleague we recommend that you download the Bright Sky App or visit their website where you will find practical advice about how to help someone with access to local support in your area. You can also call the National Domestic Abuse Helpline on 0808 2000 247 and tell them about the Ask ANI service in participating pharmacies.

If you see or hear an assault or think that your colleague is in an emergency situation call 999 and report it to the police.

Further Support

There are lots of charities and other specialist support groups who offer information and support about domestic abuse. Here are some that you might find helpful:

- MK:act - 0344 375 4307
- 24 Hour National Domestic Abuse Helpline – 0808 2000 247 – run by Refuge
- Womens Aid 0117 944 44 11
- Bright Sky App and Website - a mobile app and website for anyone experiencing domestic abuse or wanting to help someone they know. Signposting to local support
- National Centre for Domestic Violence 0800 970 2070
- Retail Trust 0800 801 0808
- Men's Advice Line 0808 801 0327
- Mankind 01823 334 244
- Galop - supporting victims of domestic abuse in the LGBT+ community - 0800 999 5428
- Forced Marriage Unit - 020 7008 0151
- Suzy Lamplugh Trust – National Stalking Helpline – 0808 802 0300
- Respect Helpline – for anyone worried about their own behaviour – 0800 802 4040
- Grocery Aid – providing practical, financial and emotional support for those working in Retail
- Hestia Respond to Abuse Helpline – a a free resource for employers. Employers can call 020 3879 3695 Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm, or email adviceline.eb@hestia.org for support, guidance or information about domestic abuse and how to support staff experiencing domestic abuse
- CrimeStoppers is an independent charity giving people the power to speak up about crime 100% anonymously. If you have information about those committing a crime, but do not want to reveal your identity, you can tell us what you know by phone on 0800 555 111 or online here 24/7 365 days a year.

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