



Amey

Domestic Abuse Policy

At Amey we recognise the importance of supporting our people who are experiencing domestic abuse. We know that some of our people will be experiencing domestic abuse, and we want you to know we are committed to support you.

We have produced this policy because we want our people to feel comfortable raising issues, so that we can provide support to those affected. We want to help you understand what domestic abuse is, how it can impact on people at work and what help is available to you externally and also internally at Amey.

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Our Commitment

In August 2022 Amey became members of the Employers Initiative on Domestic Abuse (EIDA) because we are committed to offering support to any of our people who are experiencing domestic abuse and want to shine a light on an issue that is often hidden.

We want our people to feel comfortable raising issues and look forward to working with EIDA so that our people don't see domestic abuse as a taboo subject and can instead talk openly about it.



Understanding Domestic Abuse

One in three women and one in six men will experience domestic abuse in their lifetime.

Domestic abuse can be a single incident, but it is often a pattern of abusive behaviour/incidents that goes on for a number of years. It is also not limited to physical violence.

Domestic abuse can destroy lives, leaving physical and emotional scars. People can find themselves isolated from friends and family and lose their independence.

Domestic abuse is the power and control of one person over another person aged over 16 who they are personally connected with.

What is Domestic Abuse?

Domestic abuse can take many forms:

- It is not just physical abuse - hitting, restraining or throwing objects
- It can also be financial - controlling your access to money
- Sexual - this could involve rape, sexual assault, manipulation into performing sexual acts or unwanted sexual attention
- Verbal - degrading or belittling comments etc
- Online - abusive texts, tracking devices
- Emotional and psychological - name-calling, threatening, manipulation or 'gas-lighting'

Domestic Abuse can also include repeated patterns of abusive behaviour to maintain power and control in a relationship, known as coercive control.

What is Coercive Control?

Coercive control is a pattern of oppressive behaviour intended to control someone and damage their self-esteem and confidence.

Coercive behaviour can include:

- Isolating you from friends and family
- Monitoring your time
- Gaslighting
- Monitoring you via online communication tools or spyware
- Taking control over aspects of your everyday life, such as where you can go, who you can see, what you can wear and when you can sleep
- Depriving you access to support services, such as medical services
- Controlling your finances
- Repeatedly putting you down, such as saying you're worthless
- Humiliating, degrading or dehumanising you

Domestic Abuse: Things to Understand

Sometimes the victim of abuse has become conditioned where the abuse has been normalised, and they do not recognise they are being manipulated so even if they are reading this guidance, they may not recognise the behaviour as abuse

We should not make assumptions about who the abuser may be or what someone may be experiencing but should instead listen and respond in a supportive way.

Domestic Abuse takes place at all levels of society, regardless of social class, race, religion, gender identity, sexual orientation or disability. People who experience abuse are often affected by it long after they have left their partner.

Most people who experience domestic abuse are women with a male perpetrator, but it's important to remember that men can also be subject to abuse, and domestic abuse can also happen in same-sex relationships.

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 emphasises that domestic abuse isn't necessarily between two people in a romantic relationship: perpetrators can be parents, children or siblings.

Every form of domestic abuse is a crime covered by UK legislation.

How does Domestic Abuse impact on work?

38% of people who experience domestic abuse say they suffer from reduced productivity at work

Domestic abuse has an impact at work, research finds that 75% of those enduring domestic abuse are targeted at work. This abuse can range from harassing phone calls to abusive partners arriving at the office unannounced and physical assaults. It can often make people feel that working is untenable, and they feel forced to leave their employment.

The increase in home and hybrid working has resulted in increased incidences of domestic abuse with escape routes being cut off and people feeling isolated from their support network.

Domestic abuse can negatively affect workplace colleagues as well as the person experiencing the abuse. However, importantly, the workplace can often be one of the few places that a person experiencing abuse can be separate from their abuser, and therefore can be the place where people are able to ask for access to support.

Domestic abuse can affect an employee's performance, attendance, career prospects and job security.



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If you are experiencing domestic abuse

Amey recognises that developing a life free from abuse is ongoing and not a one-off event, and we will provide ongoing support for our people who disclose abuse. We are committed to offering support and help to people who experience any kind of internal or external abuse.

You have the right to choose whether to disclose information about domestic abuse, but we encourage you to reach out to your People Manager or a colleague who you trust. Anything you disclose will be treated in confidence. If you feel unable to speak to your People Manager, you can contact one of Amey's Engagement Ambassadors.

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 in immediate danger, call 999 straight away.

If you have created an escape plan, consider sharing it with your people manager. You may not feel ready to leave yet however, if your plans are known to others your safety is paramount and Amey can support quickly when the time comes.

Your responsibility as a people manager

Managers have a duty of care for the health, safety and wellbeing of their people and are in a strong position to create a safe and supportive workplace environment.

We are not expecting managers to try to solve people's problems or act as counsellors; we recognise you are not trained professionals in this area. Instead, we ask that you signpost people so that they can gain appropriate help.

As a manager you should have the knowledge to respond appropriately and offer the right support. If you need guidance through this, EAP has manager support, you can access.

Alternatively, you can call Hestia's Respond to Abuse Advice line which is a free resource for employers. Managers can call Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm, for support, guidance, or information about domestic abuse and how to support employees and colleagues experiencing domestic abuse.

Call 07770 480 437 or 0203 879 3695

For further tips on how you can support people see Amey's Domestic Abuse guidance document that's been developed to support this policy

Spotting the signs of Domestic Abuse

Work productivity:

- Change in working patterns such as: frequent absence, lateness, leaving early, reluctance to return home
- Reduced quality and quantity of work, an unexplained drop in performance standards

Changes in behaviour & demeanour:

- Conduct not in character with previous employment history
- Changes in behaviour: tearful, very quiet, distracted, frightened, depressed etc.
- Obsession with timekeeping
- Change in the use of phone/email, avoiding calls, a large number of personal calls/texts or a strong reaction to calls texts, emails.

Other signs:

- Partner/ex-partner stalking employee in or around workplace
- Partner/ex-partner exerting unusual pressure/control over work schedule
- Isolation from family/friends

Signposting to help



✦ **National Domestic Abuse Helpline**
(Freephone, 24 hour). The helpline is run by Refuge and a live online chat is also available

✦ **Galop**
0800 999 5428; the LGBT+ anti violence charity, provides hate crime, domestic abuse and sexual violence support services to lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans+ victims/survivors by telephone, email, text and WhatsApp

✦ **Respect Men's Advice Line**
0808 801 0327; a webchat is available at certain times. This is a confidential helpline for male victims of domestic abuse and those supporting them

✦ **Bright Sky**
This is a mobile app and website for anyone experiencing domestic abuse, or who is worried about someone else.

✦ **Muslim Women's Helpline**
020 894 8193 or 020 8908 6715 aims to provide any Muslim girl or woman in a crisis with a free, confidential listening service and referral to Islamic consultants, plus practical help and information where required.

✦ **Asian Women's Resource Centre**
020 8961 6549 who provide a domestic violence and advocacy service. They provide support to women in need in the following languages: Bengali, Gujarati, Hindi, Konkani, Marathi, Pashto, Patwari, Punjabi, Urdu, Farsi, Spanish, Portuguese, Italian, Kurdish, Turkish and Azerbaijani.



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Make a record

It is essential to keep a written record of conversations with employees about domestic abuse, any incidents within the workplace and any adjustments which have been made. These may be called upon as evidence in a civil or criminal court.

These records need to be clear, accurate and should give dates, times and locations. Witnesses to such incidents should also be recorded. Under Data Protection law, the employee has the right to view all records pertaining to them, so ensure that all notes are clearly factual and do not contain opinions or additional information not disclosed in the meetings. Managers should ensure that records comply with the requirements of the UK GDPR. Some details are likely to amount to special categories data, to which additional requirements apply so you should password protect all written records.

What support can Amey offer?

- ✓ Amey's Employee Assistance Programme provides counselling, legal information and advice on financial wellbeing, relationships and housing concerns
- ✓ You can speak to one of Amey's trained Domestic Abuse Ambassadors who are also Mental Health First Aid trained
- ✓ Managers can approve 'Safe Leave' to employees fleeing an abusive situation for medical support, legal advice or to attend Police appointments. You may also need time to arrange alternative accommodation, schooling or childcare. We recognise that each situation will be different; so, we haven't set a cap on the number of days that can be taken. Instead, we ask you to agree how many days you need at a local level with your People Manager. Managers can select 'authorised paid leave' on MSS to securely record the absence
- ✓ Financial support – Managers can provide a salary advance to someone who is escaping an abusive situation
- ✓ We can also support you by providing reference requests/confirming salary information to accommodation/lettings agencies.

What to do if an employee discloses, they are a perpetrator

When someone admits to abuse, there is much to consider, including your responsibilities as their manager, to other team members, as well as the potential criminal implications. If you believe someone is in immediate danger, dial 999 and ask for the police

All employers have a duty of care towards their people. This includes perpetrators of domestic abuse who, through their actions, are damaging their own lives as well as the lives of others. Engaging with perpetrators of abuse in a positive, respectful way does not mean excusing the abuse and can help to increase safety.

You can signpost people following disclosure to charities such as Respect, Safe Lives and The Everyman Project who work directly with perpetrators to help break the cycle of abuse and violence. Through various methods including training and counselling they challenge and support perpetrators to take responsibility for their actions; develop empathy and respect for those around them; identify and harness what will motivate them to make changes in their lives to reduce and stop altogether their abusive, angry, and violent behaviour.

People Managers should contact Croner advice for additional support and we recommend you also contact Hestia's Respond to Abuse Advice employers' line on 07770 480 437 or 0203 879 3695.

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Bright Sky



Bright sky is a free tool available as both a mobile app and website, for anyone experiencing domestic abuse, or for anyone who is worried about someone else.

The app included questionnaires to assess the safety of a relationship, plus a section on dispelling myths around domestic and sexual abuse. The website is focused on how to spot the signs of domestic abuse, advice on how to support someone you have concerns for, and ways to find help.

Features:

- The app is available in 5 languages: English, Urdu, Punjabi, Polish and Welsh
- A unique UK-wide directory of specialist domestic abuse support services with contact details, and nationwide helplines that are available 24/7
- Content to help you understand if you or someone else is at risk
- Links to further resources and information on domestic abuse
- Information to help you stay safe online

