

DEFINITIONS: DOMESTIC ABUSE WORKPLACE POLICY

<p>Violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence (VAWDASV) – Definition of ‘Violence against women’</p>	<p>Violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence (VAWDASV) ‘Violence against women’ has been defined by the United Nations as</p> <p>‘Any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life. The term violence against women is used to describe violence perpetrated against a woman because she is a woman*, being recognised internationally as a violation of human rights.’</p> <p>*This definition uses the term women to refer to those who are born biologically female. It acknowledges the violence against women is a global issue, is usually perpetrated by men, and exists due to gender inequality. However, it is necessary to consider individuals who’s gender identity differs from what they were assigned at birth within this definition.</p>
<p>Domestic abuse</p>	<p>Domestic abuse can have lasting effects on the physical and mental wellbeing of those that experience it. It is not just physical violence, but can also take other forms such as emotional, controlling and coercive behaviour and economic abuse between two people aged 16 years or over who are personally connected.</p> <p>Section 3 of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, also recognises children associated with the victim or perpetrator as victims and not just witnesses to domestic abuse. Not all victims of domestic abuse and sexual violence are women. Domestic abuse can affect men and those with a non-binary identity. However, the vast majority of those experiencing abuse are women.</p> <p>‘Abusive behaviour’ is defined in the act as any of the following:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• physical or sexual abuse• violent or threatening behaviour• controlling or coercive behaviour• economic abuse• psychological, emotional, or other abuse. <p>For the definition to apply, both parties must be aged 16 or over and ‘personally connected’.</p> <p>‘Personally connected’ is defined in the act as parties who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• are married to each other• are civil partners of each other• have agreed to marry one another (whether or not the agreement has been terminated)• have entered into a civil partnership agreement (whether or not the agreement has been terminated)• are or have been in an intimate personal relationship with each other• have, or there has been a time when they each have had, a parental relationship in relation to the same child• are relatives. <p>Anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse, regardless of gender, age, ethnicity, religion, socio-economic status, sexuality or background.</p>
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<p>Forms of domestic abuse</p>	<p>The following section sets out the various forms of abuse, which a person may experience in a violent relationship (Women’s Aid Federation 2010):</p> <p>Physical abuse The use of weapons, punching, head butting, suffocation, hair pulling, kicking, slapping, strangulation, drowning, burning, sleep deprivation, rape and murder.</p> <p>Psychological Mind games, constantly moving the goalposts, blaming the other person for the abuse, blaming other factors in the relationship for the abuse, undermining parental authority, telling the person they are mad.</p> <p>Emotional Saying no-one else will want them, telling them they are fat, ugly, stupid, lazy, sexually unappealing or a bad parent.</p> <p>Economic No access to money, no access to salary, child allowance or other benefits, not named on the mortgage/tenancy papers, no access to the bank account.</p> <p>Destructive criticism and verbal abuse Shouting, mocking, accusing, name calling, verbally threatening.</p> <p>Pressure tactics Sulking, threatening to withhold money, disconnecting the telephone, taking the car away, taking the children away, reporting you to welfare agencies unless you comply with the demands regarding the parenting of the children; lying to your friends and family about you, telling you that you have no choice in any decision making processes.</p> <p>Disrespect Persistently putting you down in front of other people, not listening or responding when you talk, interrupting telephone calls, refusing to help with childcare or housework.</p> <p>Breaking trust Lying, withholding information, being jealous, having other relationships, breaking promises and shared agreements.</p> <p>Isolation Accompanied everywhere for example shopping, doctors; locked in, allowed out for set time periods only, not allowed contact with</p>
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friends or family, leaving visible signs of injury to embarrass and deter you from going out, monitoring or blocking your telephone calls.

Harassment

Being followed or being checked up on, opening mail, checking mobile telephone call history or texts, repeatedly dialling 1471 to see who has telephoned, embarrassment in public.

Threats

Making angry gestures, using physical size to intimidate, shouting down, destroying possessions, breaking things, punching walls, wielding a weapon.

Sexual

Non-consenting participation in bestiality, drugs, use of objects pornography, buggery; rape, unwanted touch, forced sex with others.

Denial

Saying the abuse doesn't happen, saying you caused the abusive behaviour, being publicly gentle and patient, crying and begging for forgiveness, saying it will never happen again.

“Honour” based violence (Crown Prosecution Service 2015)

Honour based violence is a crime or incident which has or may have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family/and or community.

Forced marriage (Home Office 2013)

A forced marriage is where one or both people do not (or in cases of people with learning disabilities cannot) consent to marriage and pressure and abuse is used.

Female genital mutilation (FGM) (World Health Organisation 2016)

FGM comprises all procedures that involve partial or total removal of the female external genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons.

Coercive control (Women's Aid 2020)

Domestic abuse isn't always physical. Coercive control is an act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish, or frighten their victim. It is a criminal offence under section 76 of the Serious Crime Act (2015). Some common examples of coercive behaviour are:-

	<p>during pregnancy and it has been identified as a prime cause of miscarriage or stillbirth. This may prevent women from seeking or perceiving proper antenatal and postnatal care.</p> <p>In addition, where there is abuse, this may affect attachment to the child with resultant detrimental effect on the psychological wellbeing of the developing infant/child. Routine antenatal and postnatal health assessment by midwives and health visitors includes a question on the experience of domestic abuse (All Wales Domestic Abuse Routine Enquiry Pathway, 2006).</p>
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<p>Risks to Children</p>	<p>The risks to children living with domestic abuse include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct physical or sexual abuse of the child. Research shows this happens in up to 60% of cases; also that the severity of the abuse against the non-abusive parent is predictive of the severity of abuse to the children. • The child being abused as part of the abuse. • Being used as pawns or spies by the abusive partner in attempts to control the non-abusive parent. • Being forced to participate in the abuse and degradation by the abusive partner. • Emotional abuse and physical injury to the child from witnessing the abuse. • Hearing abusive verbal exchanges between adults in the household. • Observing bruises and injuries sustained by the non-abusive parent. • Hearing their non-abusive parent's screams and pleas for help. • Observing the abusive parent being removed and taken into police custody. • Attempting to intervene in a violent assault. • Being physically injured as a result of intervening or by being accidentally hurt whilst present during a violent assault. • Being unable or unwilling to invite friends to the house. • Frequent disruptions to social life and schooling.
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