



Domestic Abuse Policy for Wandsworth's housing services



Easy read version

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What is domestic abuse?

Domestic abuse is when someone hurts or controls another person in their home. For example, common forms of abuse are:



Physical (hitting, pushing)



Emotional (bullying, name-calling)



Financial (taking money, stopping someone from working)



Controlling (telling someone what to do, who to see)



Stalking and harassment (following you and unwanted approach)



Honour-based abuse (abuse linked to beliefs that a family or community has, such as forced marriage, female genital mutilation)

Introduction

This policy explains how the housing teams in the council help people who are affected by domestic abuse. It shows what support is available and how staff can help.

This policy is for:



Any person who is affected by domestic abuse



Friends and family of people affected



Council staff and partner organisations who want to help

Our legal responsibilities

We have legal responsibilities to help victims and survivors. We want to ensure their safety. Our responsibilities are:



Providing a response that will keep victims and survivors, as well as their families, safe



Recognising and treating children as victims and survivors if they see or witness abuse



Making a referral for support if a victim or survivor is at high risk of injury or death because of abuse



Providing housing support to people who are homeless because of abuse



Offering temporary accommodation to keep victims and survivors safe

How to get help

If a victim or survivor needs help, they can:



Call **999** if they are in immediate danger



Contact the council for help by calling us on the telephone



If the person is homeless because of abuse, visit the council homelessness team for support



Council tenants can contact their Estate Manager or Area Team



Contact domestic abuse support services and charities



Visit the One Stop Shop service, which is a drop-in service for people experiencing abuse

See our contacts section from page 11 for more information.

What to expect from our services

When someone comes to us for help, we will make sure:



Staff are trained to understand domestic abuse



Support will be offered that reflects what the person needs. They will be treated in a fair and kind way



Council staff will work with other services like the police, social care and professionals to keep victims and survivors safe



Safety plans will be agreed to help and support the person

What your options are

There is no single 'solution' when helping people who experience abuse. All staff are trained to understand the different options. When a person experiences domestic abuse, staff will consider:



Sanctuary schemes: all residents can ask for extra security measures like changing locks, installing alarms and putting up cameras. These services are free of charge



Management transfers: social housing tenants can apply for an 'emergency move' to a new permanent social home



Homeless support: teams can help with homelessness and consider providing temporary accommodation



Relocation: social housing tenants can consider moving home through mutual exchange schemes



Financial support: dedicated teams can help victims or survivors who have rent arrears due to abuse

Working in partnership

Council staff work with different services to make sure victims and survivors receive the best support. This includes:



National services and charities



Children and adult social care services if there are safeguarding concerns



Attending meetings called the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference that includes different professionals to review high risk cases



With the person's consent, we will make referrals to support services

Please remember, if the person is assessed as high risk, staff do not need consent when referring to support services.

Equality, diversity and inclusion

Everyone is different. Some people may need more help because of their nationality, health, sexuality, or religion. We can help people who:



Don't speak English: we can provide translation services



Have a disability: we can make adaptations to help the person



Identify as LGBTQ+: we will not discriminate



Are elderly or from a minority group: we welcome everyone and will meet your needs

Contact details for our services

Here are some useful contacts should you need help:

Wandsworth Council Homelessness Prevention and Solutions Team

If you are homeless, you can:



- Submit an online application
[www.wandsworth.gov.uk/
homelessness-application-process](http://www.wandsworth.gov.uk/homelessness-application-process)



- Call us on **020 8871 6840**
- Visit us at Housing Reception Centre,
90 Putney Bridge Road, London,
SW18 1HR



Our opening hours are 9am to 4.30pm
(Monday to Friday)

Temporary Accommodation Team:

If you are in temporary accommodation provided by the Council, you can:



- Call us on: **020 8871 6161**
- Email us: [temporaryaccommodation
@wandsworth.gov.uk](mailto:temporaryaccommodation@wandsworth.gov.uk)

Wandsworth Council tenants: Area Team contacts

If you are a Wandsworth Council tenant, you can contact your Estate Manager. If you do not have their details, you can contact your Area Team:



- Central Area: **020 8871 5333**
- Eastern Area: **020 8871 7439**
- Southern Area: **020 8871 7288**
- Western Area: **020 8871 5530**



The Central, Eastern and Southern Area Team office is at:

Housing Reception Centre,
90 Putney Bridge Road,
London, SW18 1HR

Opening times are 9am to 4.30pm
(Monday to Friday)

The Western Area Team office is at:

Western Area Housing Office,
Roehampton Parish Hall, Alton Road,
London, SW15 4LG

Opening times are 9am to 4.30pm
(Monday to Friday)

Domestic Abuse One Stop Shop

To visit the free drop-in service, please visit:



St. Mark's

Opening times: every Monday between 10am to 12 noon (excluding bank holidays)

Address: St. Mark's, Battersea Rise, SW11 1EJ

Eastwood Children's Centre

Opening times: every Wednesday between 10am to 12.30pm

Address: 166 Roehampton Lane, Roehampton, London, SW15 4HR

You DO NOT NEED to book an appointment.



For contact details of other local and national charities, please see page 21 on the full Domestic Abuse policy. Visit: www.wandsworth.gov.uk/housing_services_domestic_abuse_policy.pdf